Poetic Voice Magazine

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Poetic Voice Magazine: Volume Fifteen

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Cover picture: A Man and A Pomegranate by Ani Gavani

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Featured Poem: To Comfort Me by Chloe

I let him
come to me
that night
to comfort me
so that later
he would come
inside of me, to
comfort me.

He let me sleep
alone when he
left me, with a little
comfort all inside
of me.

My little one
was born that fall.
My beautiful daughter …
Her name is Emily.

Poetic Voice Magazine Welcomes Submissions

Obelisk Press of Vancouver is pleased to publish this fifteenth volume of ***Poetic Voice Magazine*** which serves to feature the work of aspiring poets.

Poetic Voice Magazine welcomes submissions on a quarterly basis. Please feel free to submit your poetry to

pbruskiewich @ gmail.com

There is no fee to submit. There is no writer's fee provided by the journal for those who submit. The publishing rights remain with the writer.

Poetic Commentary

Commentary: A Crazy Man … by Patrick Bruskiewich

With witty *waka* *
in the wind, a crazy man
perhaps I've become.
Don't throw rocks at me, or I
will throw loud words back at you.

This first line is borrowed from a Haiku by Basho

With witty *waka* in the wind
I must look a little like
Chikusai now.

A *waka* is a form of Japanese classical poetry of 31 syllables in 5-7-5-7-7.

A *haiku* is a form of Japanese classical poetry of 17 syllables in 5-7-5

My poem *A Crazy Man …* is a *tanka*, which is a modern form of *waka* poetry.

Pictorial: Reflexion by William Bouguereau

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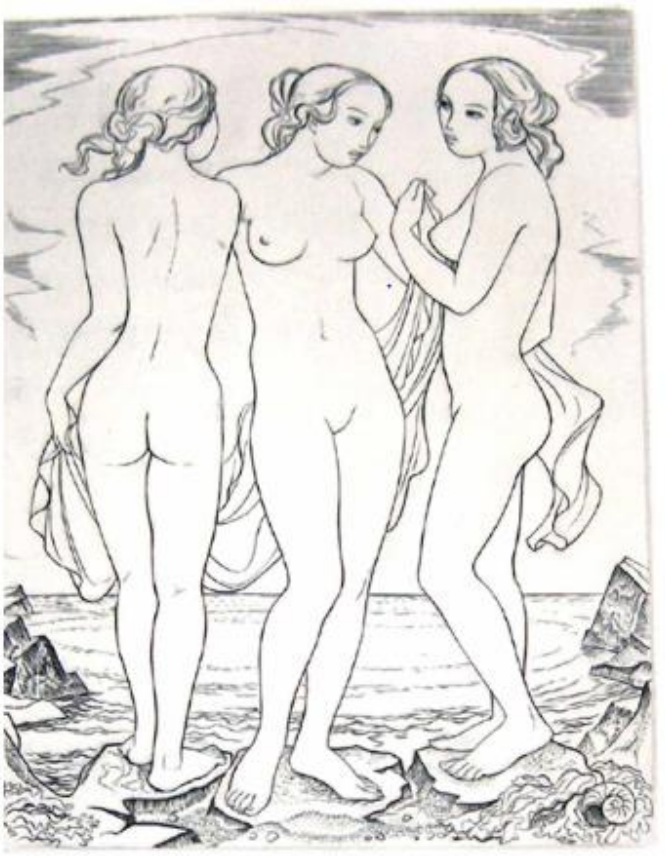

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Editor in Chief: Patrick Bruskiewich

New Poems

The Pomegranate by Eavan Boland

The only legend I have ever loved is
the story of a daughter lost in hell.
And found and rescued there.
Love and blackmail are the gist of it.
Ceres and Persephone the names.
And the best thing about the legend is
I can enter it anywhere. And have.
As a child in exile in
a city of fogs and strange consonants,
I read it first and at first I was
an exiled child in the crackling dusk of
the underworld, the stars blighted. Later
I walked out in a summer twilight
searching for my daughter at bed-time.
When she came running I was ready
to make any bargain to keep her.
I carried her back past white beams
and wasps and honey-scented buddleias.
But I was Ceres then and I knew
winter was in store for every leaf
on every tree on that road.
Was inescapable for each one we passed. And for me.

It is winter

and the stars are hidden
.I climb the stairs and stand where I can see
my child asleep beside her teen magazines,
her can of Coke, her plate of uncut fruit.
The pomegranate! How did I forget it?
She could have come home and been safe
and ended the story and all
our heart-broken searching but she reached
out a hand and plucked a pomegranate.
She put out her hand and pulled down
the French sound for apple and
the noise of stone and the proof
that even in the place of death,
at the heart of legend, in the midst
of rocks full of unshed tears
ready to be diamonds by the time
the story was told, a child can be
hungry. I could warn her. There is still a chance.
The rain is cold. The road is flint-coloured.
The suburb has cars and cable television.
The veiled stars are above ground.
It is another world. But what else
can a mother give her daughter but such
beautiful rifts in time?
If I defer the grief I will diminish the gift.
The legend will be hers as well as mine.

She will enter it. As I have.
She will wake up. She will hold
the papery flushed skin in her hand.
And to her lips. I will say nothing.

I am a Pomegranate by Amber S.

I am a pomegranate.
cut me open.
break my outer skin.

inside of me is my fruit.
the meat of me.
hidden.

dig your fingers into me,
pulling me apart.
ripping me to pieces.

I do not want to be
in your mouth.
feel the heat of your breath.

chew me up.
spit me out.
and leave me empty.

How to Cut a Pomegranate by Imtiaz Dharker

Never,' said my father,
'Never cut a pomegranate
through the heart. It will weep blood.
Treat it delicately, with respect.

Just slit the upper skin across four quarters.
This is a magic fruit,
so when you split it open, be prepared
for the jewels of the world to tumble out,
more precious than garnets,
more lustrous than rubies,
lit as if from inside.
Each jewel contains a living seed.
Separate one crystal
.Hold it up to catch the light.
Inside is a whole universe.
No common jewel can give you this.'

Afterwards, I tried to make necklaces
of pomegranate seeds.
The juice spurted out, bright crimson,
and stained my fingers, then my mouth.

I didn't mind. The juice tasted of gardens

I had never seen, voluptuous
with myrtle, lemon, jasmine,
and alive with parrots' wings.

The pomegranate reminded me
that somewhere I had another home.

In No Way So Grand by Patrick Bruskiewich

Nature can be described
in many ways,
but in no way so grand
as through the use of
mathematics.

And when we accept that
we may also eventually accept
that we are not more important
in the grand scheme of the universe
than a bird that flies overhead
or any other living creature
for that matter,
even an ant crawling at our feet.
If we accept this
then perhaps we can appreciate
what it means to think and
to have worthy ideas.

Pictorial: Pomegranates by Minna Keene

Circa 1910

20th Century Poems

Pomegranate by D.H. Lawrence

You tell me I am wrong.
Who are you, who is anybody to tell me I am wrong?
I am not wrong.

In Syracuse, rock left bare by the viciousness of Greek women,
No doubt you have forgotten the pomegranate trees in flower,
Oh so red, and such a lot of them.

Whereas at Venice,
Abhorrent, green, slippery city
Whose Doges were old, and had ancient eyes,
In the dense foliage of the inner garden
Pomegranates like bright green stone,
And barbed, barbed with a crown.
Oh, crown of spiked green metal
Actually growing!

Now, in Tuscany,
Pomegranates to warm your hands at;
And crowns, kingly, generous, tilting crowns
Over the left eyebrow.

And, if you dare, the fissure!

Do you mean to tell me you will see no fissure?
Do you prefer to look on the plain side?

For all that, the setting suns are open.
The end cracks open with the beginning:
Rosy, tender, glittering within the fissure.

Do you mean to tell me there should be no fissure?
No glittering, compact drops of dawn?
Do you mean it is wrong, the gold-filmed skin, integument,
shown ruptured?

For my part, I prefer my heart to be broken.
It is so lovely, dawn-kaleidoscopic within the crack.

Written in San Gervasio in Tuscany

Pictorial: Seated Nude by William Bougeureau

Surrealist and Dada Poetry

Sonnet Actualities by e.e. cumings

I

When my love comes to see me
it's just a little like music, a little more
like curving colour (say orange)
against silence, or darkness. ...
the coming of my love emits
a wonderful smell in my mind,
you should see when i turn to find
her how my least heart-beat becomes less.
And then all her beauty is a vise
whose stilling lips murder suddenly me,
but of my corpse the tool her smile makes something
suddenly luminous and precise
—and then we are I and She....
what is that the hurdy-gurdy's playing

II

it is funny, you will be dead some day.
By you the mouth hair eyes, and i mean
the unique and nervously obscene
need; it's funny. They will all be dead
knead of lustfulhunched deeplytoplay lips

and stare the gross fuzzy-*pash* *
—dead—and the dark gold delicately smash ...
grass, and the stars, of my shoulder in stead.
It is a funny thing. And you will be
and i and all the days and nights that matter
knocked by sun moon jabbed jerked with ecstasy
... tremble (not knowing how much better
than me will you like the rain's face and
the rich improbable hands of the Wind)

* (*pash* – a strong feeling of liking or loving someone or something, especially feelings that do not last very long)

IV

utterly and amusingly i am pash
possibly because
dusk and if it
perhaps dreamingly Is (not-
quite trees hugging with the rash,
coherent light
) only to trace with
stiffening slow shrill eyes beyond a fit-
and-cling of stuffs the alert willing myth
of body, which will make oddly to strut
my indolent priceless smile,

until
this very frail enormous star (do you see
it?) and this shall dance upon the nude
and final silence and shall the
(i do but touch you) timid lewd
moon plunge skilfully into the hill.

V

before the fragile gradual throne of night
slowly when several stars are
opening one beyond one immaculate curving
cool treasures of silence
(slenderly wholly
rising, herself uprearing wholly slowly,
lean in the hips and her sails filled with dream—
when on a green brief gesture of twilight
trembles the imagined galleon of Spring)
somewhere unspeaking sits my life; the grim
clenched mind of me somewhere begins again,
shares the year's perfect agony. Waiting
(always) upon a fragile instant when
herself me (slowly, wholly me) will press
in the young lips unearthly slenderness

VI

when i have thought of you somewhat too
much and am become perfectly and
simply Lustful ... sense a gradual stir
of beginning muscle, and what it will do to me
before shutting ... understand
i love you ... feel your suddenly body reach
for me with a speed of white speech
(the simple instant of perfect hunger
Yes)
how beautifully swims
the fooling world in my huge blood,
cracking brains A swiftlyenormous light
—and furiously puzzling through, prismatic, whims,
the chattering self perceives with hysterical fright
a comic tadpole wriggling in delicious mud

The Passionate Man is by Patrick Bruskiewich

The self passionate man is ...

for those
        objectively;
                from
the infinitesimal
        the striving
                can best us;

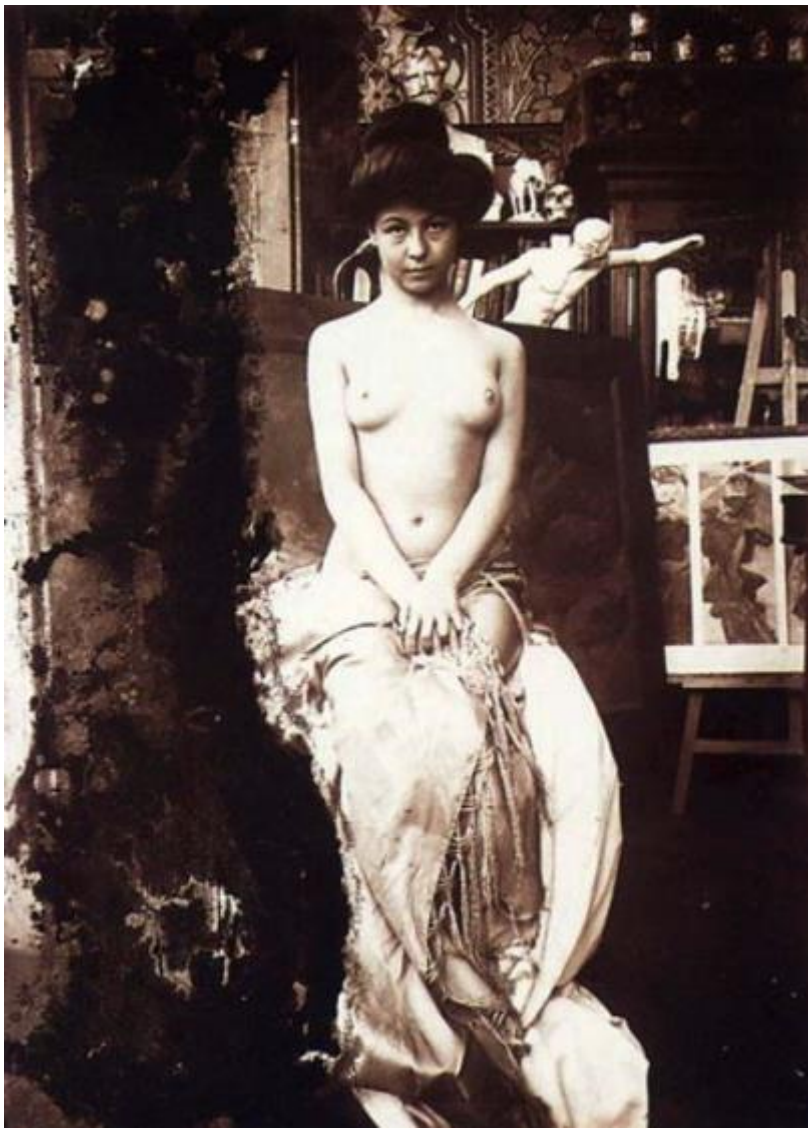
the bonds
        that free us

friend who utter
        Truth to us

a wrestle measured
that makes the greatest

that are and am

Pictorial: A Model Sitting for the First Time (circa 1905)



Canadian Poems

Two Poems by Annie Campbell Huestis

On the Stair

As I went lonely up the stair
Ah me, the ghost that I saw there!
So bright and near it seemed to be,
It laid a hand with tender touch
On my sad eyes that wept too much,
And bent a wistful face to me,—
It was the friend whose heart I brake
With many a grief for my false sake.
The hand that sought to dry my tears
Had dried her own in earlier years—
The patient tears I made her shed.
The face that bent to comfort me
From the dark hall where none could see
Had smiled on me as she lay dead.
It was the friend I did not spare
Who met me on the lonely stair.
If I could live those years again
And break no trust, and give no pain,
And nobly grieve to see her die.
We could forget that she was dead,
And all the years so strangely fled,
And love this meeting, she and I;

But I was false as friend could be
And she comes back to comfort me.

The Little White Sun

The sky had a gray, gray _ face.
The touch of the mist was chill,
The earth was an eerie place,
For the wind moaned over the hill
;
But the brown earth laughed, and the sky turned blue,
When the little white sun came peeping through.
The wet leaves saw it and smiled,
The glad birds gave it a song
—
A cry from a heart, glee-wild.
And the echoes laug'h it along: -..
And the wind and I went whisthng, too, .
"
When the little white sun came peeping through. '
,
So, welcome the chill of rain V.
^'
And the world in its dreary guise
—
To have it over again.

That moment of sweet surprise.
When the brown earth laughs, and the sky turns blue,
As the little white sun comes peeping through.

Two poems by George Frederick Cameron

Standing on Tiptoe

Standing on tiptoe ever since my youth
Striving to grasp the future just above,
I hold at length the only future—Truth,
And Truth is Love.

I feel as one who being awhile confined
Sees drop to dust about him all his bars :—
The clay grows less, and, leaving it, the mind
Dwells with the stars.

I Am Young

I am young, and men
Who long ago have passed their prime
Would fain have what I have again, —
Youth, and it may be—time.

To gain these, and make
Life's end what it may not be now,
Monarchs of thought and song would shake
The laurels from their brow.

And each king of earth.
Whose life we deem a holiday.
For this would give his kingship's worth
Most joyously away!

Pictorial: A Pomegranate … from a Better Angle …

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Editor in Chief: Patrick Bruskiewich

Historical Poetry

Song of Solomon 4:12-15

Come with me from Lebanon, my bride.
Leave Lebanon behind, and come.
Leave your high mountain hideaway.
Abandon your wilderness seclusion,
Where you keep company with lions
and panthers guard your safety.
You've captured my heart, dear friend.
You looked at me, and I fell in love.
One look my way and I was hopelessly in love!
How beautiful your love, dear, dear friend—
far more pleasing than a fine, rare wine,
your fragrance more exotic than select spices.
The kisses of your lips are honey, my love,
every syllable you speak a delicacy to savor.
Your clothes smell like the wild outdoors,
the fresh scent of high mountains.
Dear lover and friend, you're a secret garden,
a private and pure fountain.
Body and soul, you are paradise,
a whole orchard of succulent fruits—
Ripe apricots and peaches,
Pomegranates, oranges and pears;
Nut trees and cinnamon,
and all scented woods;

Mint and lavender,
    and all herbs aromatic;
A garden fountain, sparkling and splashing,
    fed by spring waters from the Lebanon mountains.

Two Poems from Catullus

Sappho's Ode

Blest as th' immortal gods is he,
The youth, who fondly sits by thee,
And hears and sees thee all the while
Softly speak, and sweetly smile.

'Twas that deprived my soul of rest,
And raised such tumults in my breast;
For while I gazed, in transport toss'd,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.

My bosom glow'd; the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame;
On my dim eyes a darkness hung;
My ears with hollow murmurs rung:

With dewy damp my limbs were chill'd;
My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd;
My feeble pulse forgot to play;
I fainted, sank, and died away.

TRANSLATED BY AMBROSE PHILLIPS

To Lesbia. On Her Falsehood

To me alone, thou said'st, thy love was true,
And true, should be, though Jove himself might woo.
I loved thee, Lesbia, not as rakes may prize
The favourite wanton who has pleased their eyes;
Mine was a tender glow, a purer zeal;
'Twas all the parent for the child can feel.

Thy common falsehood now, thyself I know;
And though my frame with fiercer heat may glow,
Yet Lesbia's vile and worthless in my sight,
Compared with Lesbia once my heart's delight;
Nor wonder passion's unrestrained excess
Makes me desire thee more, but love thee less.

TRANSLATED BY GEORGE LAMB

Pictorial: A Model and her Amphora

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